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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service

Tongass
National
Forest
R10-MB-102

May 1990



Southeast Chichagof Project Area Scoping Information

Chatham Area
Tongass National Forest



THE CHICHAGOF
PROJECT AREA

CHICHAGOF
PROJECT AREA

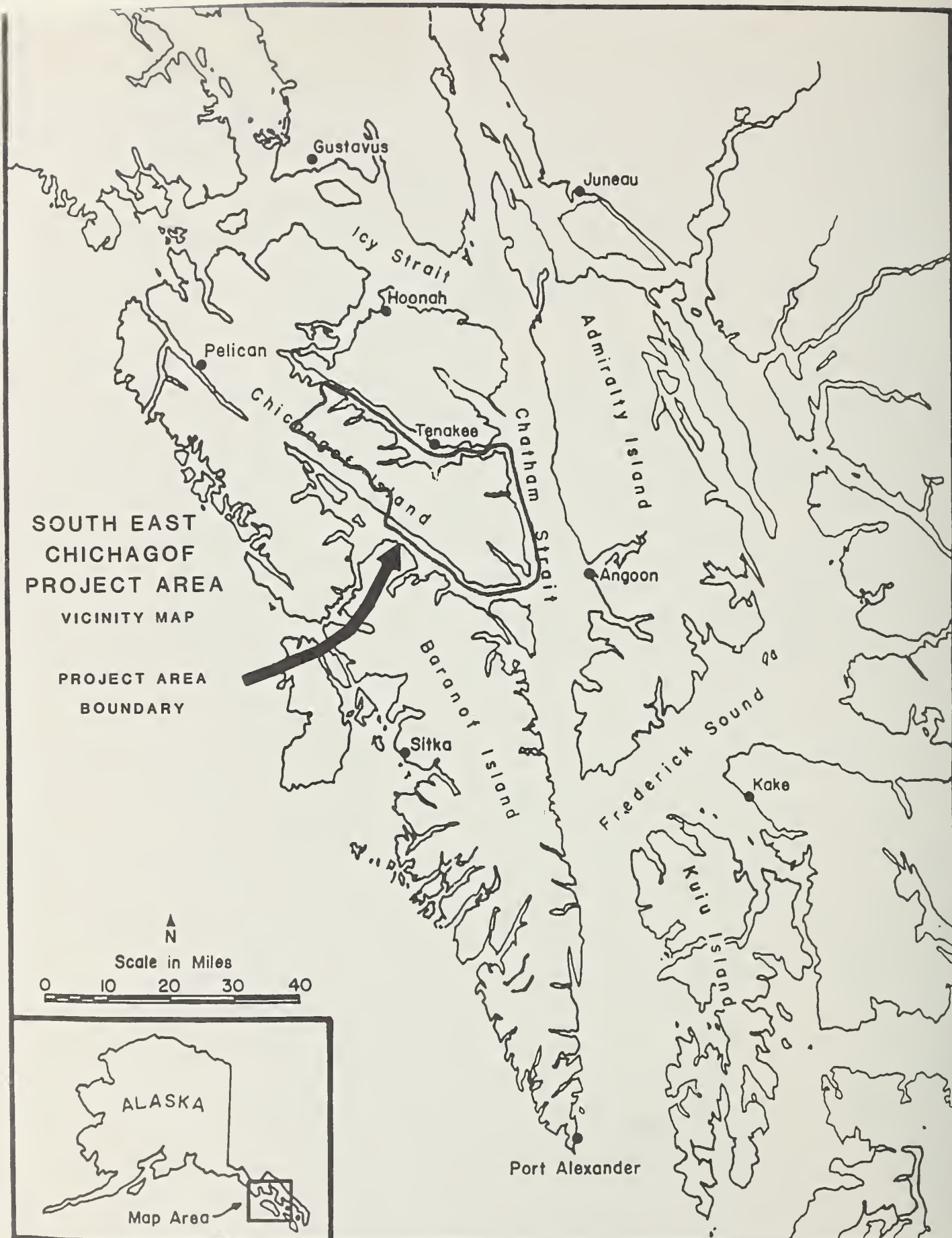
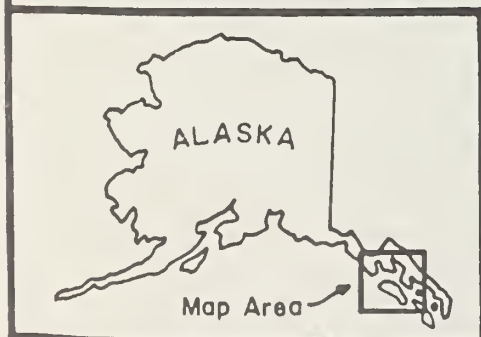
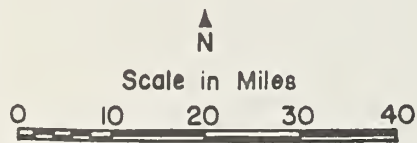
CHICHAGOF
PROJECT AREA



**SOUTH EAST
CHICHAGOF
PROJECT AREA**

VICINITY MAP

PROJECT AREA
BOUNDARY





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Region 10
Tongass National Forest

Chatham Area
204 Siginaka Way
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-6671

Reply To: 1950

Date: May 11, 1990

Dear Participant:

The Chatham Area of the Tongass National Forest is initiating a second planning process for the Alaska Pulp Corporation long term timber sale. Recently you received a scoping document for the Kelp Bay planning project. The time for input into that specific project is over for the time being. This document will introduce you to an entirely new project, the Southeast Chichagof Project Environmental Impact Statement. We hope you will choose to participate in this process as well. This project proposal includes timber harvest and road construction in the Corner Bay, Sitkoh Bay, Crab Bay, Saltery Bay and False Island areas on the Southeast portion of Chichagof Island. Enclosed with this letter is a scoping document, which provides more detail on the proposal.

Your name is on our current public involvement mailing list, and I thank you for your past participation with the USDA Forest Service's previous planning activities. As we begin this new project, we are seeking individuals who are knowledgeable about this area and are interested in the proposed activities.

You may be asking, why is the Forest Service asking me to get involved in two separate planning efforts so close together? Recently we entered into a new contract modification with the Alaska Pulp Corporation a portion of which allows us to prepare and offer smaller volumes of timber. Because of this we are concurrently under taking separate two Environmental Impact Statements. Each of these requires a that a separate scoping process be undertaken. As a public participant, it is equally important that you contribute to this project as well. You can still provide valuable information on issues specific to this project area, that we may be overlooking. Plus, your comments at an early stage will allow us to be sure to collect the appropriate data, analyze our information and respond to your concerns in a timely manner. I invite you to take a few minutes to review this document and send us your thoughts.

We would like to receive your comments by close of business Friday June 22, 1990, so that we can be sure to address your concerns as we continue our field investigations this season. If you would rather, feel free to stop by and visit our office or telephone the Southeast Chichagof planning team leader, Gordon Anderson, in Sitka, at (907) 747-6671.

Please use the public comment form included in this document to provide us with your comments, or if you wish to continue to receive our mailings. These mailings will keep you updated on our planning progress for the Southeast Chichagof project area. Thank you again, and we look forward to working with you. Your contribution early in the process can make a difference.

Sincerely,

GARY A. MORRISON
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures

900430 1153 TM 1950 GS



SOUTHEAST CHICHAGOF PROJECT AREA SCOPING INFORMATION

The intent of this scoping document is to answer the most commonly asked questions concerning proposed projects in the Southeast Chichagof area. It also includes some information about previous management activities within the area. We invite you to read it and send us your thoughts and comments.

Where is the project?

The project area is located at the southeast end of Chichagof Island and includes Sitkoh Bay, False Island, Basket Bay, Corner Bay, Crab Bay, Saltery Bay, Inbetween, Seal Bay, and Long Bay (see vicinity map on page 2).

What is the purpose of the project?

The Forest Service mission **“is to provide a continuing flow of natural resource goods and services to help meet the needs of the Nation and to contribute to the international community”**, now and into the future.

Prior to Alaska statehood, the US Congress approved enactment of 50-year timber sale contracts on the Tongass National Forest. The purpose of these contracts was to provide for economic growth and stability to a fledgling territory. In 1956, The Federal government and Alaska Lumber and Pulp Corporation, now Alaska Pulp Corporation (APC), entered into a 50-year contract which provided terms for sale of timber and logging on parts of Baranof, Chichagof, Kuiu and associated islands.

The proposed activities in the Southeast Chichagof area would enable the Forest Service to meet it's contractual responsibility to provide timber to Alaska Pulp Corporation within the provisions of the Land Management Plan for the Tongass National Forest. The responsible official for the

approval of the proposed activities is Michael A. Barton, Regional Forester for the Alaska Region.

What kinds of decisions will be made?

The Regional Forester, based upon the collection and analysis of resource data by an interdisciplinary team, will determine whether and how to make timber available in the Southeast Chichagof project area to meet the contractual commitments of the Alaska Pulp Corporation timber sale contract. Part of his consideration will include making timber available while meeting the needs of society now and into the future for a combination of recreation, water, fish and wildlife. Specifically, the Regional Forester will decide whether timber harvest will occur in the Southeast Chichagof area. If so, he will also decide the following:



1. How much volume to make available?
2. The location and design of timber harvest units.
3. The location and design of mainline and local road corridors needed to access the Southeast Chichagof area.
4. The location and design of log transfer facilities.
5. Necessary standards and guidelines, mitigation measures, and enhancement opportunities for resources other than timber.
6. Whether there may be a significant restriction on subsistence lifestyles.

How does this project relate to the current Tongass Land Management Plan?

This project would implement some of the decisions made in the current Tongass Land Management Plan. This Forest Plan divides the Tongass National Forest into four broad categories for management activities. These categories, called **Land Use Designations (LUDs)** apply to portions of the National Forest, called **Value Comparison Units (VCUs)**. Summarized below is a description of the four Land Use Designations and the VCUs within the project area to which each LUD is assigned.

LUD I applies to areas suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System and prescribes management appropriate for these areas. No such areas were identified within the Southeast Chichagof project area.

LUD II applies to areas managed in a roadless state in order to retain their wildland character. This designation would permit wildlife and fish habitat improvement and primitive recreation development. VCU 228 - Long Bay and 229 - Seal Bay are LUD II areas. There is no timber harvesting, road construction or log transfer facilities pro-

posed for these VCUs. However, the effect of the proposed activities elsewhere in the project area, on resources in this VCU, will be evaluated and considered.

LUD III applies to areas managed for a variety of uses, including both the enhancement of amenity resources (water quality, wildlife and fish habitat, scenic views, outdoor recreation) and the production of commodity resources (timber harvesting, mineral development, commercial fishing). The emphasis is on managing for uses and activities in a compatible manner to provide the greatest combination of benefits. VCU 239 Kook Lake is the only VCU in the planning area with a LUD III designation.

LUD IV applies to areas managed to provide opportunities for intensive resource use and development, where the emphasis is primarily on commodity resources. Activities such as timber harvesting, mineral development and commercial fishing are emphasized while protecting the other resources of the area. VCU 227 - Hub Station, VCU 230 - Beth Station, VCU 231 - Saltery Bay, VCU 232 - Crab Bay, and VCU 233 - South Crab Bay, VCU 234 - Inbetween, VCU 236 - Corner Bay, VCU 240 - Little Basket Bay, VCU 241 - Do 2 Station, VCU 242 - White Rock, VCU 243 - Sitkoh Bay, VCU 244 - Sitkoh Lake, VCU 245 - False Island and VCU 246 - Broad Island have all been assigned to the LUD IV designation.

During the winter of 1985-86 the Tongass Land Management Plan was amended. Part of that amendment dealt with scheduling VCUs for a wide range of activities. Within the Southeast Chichagof project area, all LUD III and LUD IV VCUs were scheduled for timber sale preparation during the 1991-1995 period except for VCU 227. These VCUs also fall within the Alaska Pulp Corporation timber sale contract boundary. The proposed activities within the Southeast

Chichagof project area are consistent with both the Land Use Designations and the activity schedule documented by the Tongass Land Management Plan.

Why was this area selected over other areas inside the Alaska Pulp Corporation contract area boundary?

As discussed under the previous question, timber sale preparation was scheduled in the Southeast Chichagof project area for the 1991-1995 period by the Tongass Land Management Plan amended Winter 1985-86. In addition, several other factors were used to select the Southeast Chichagof project area over the other areas available for timber harvest within the Alaska Pulp Corporation contract area boundary. These factors are discussed on the next page.

Length of time since the past harvesting occurred.

The first timber harvesting within the project area first occurred prior to the 1960's. These were small scale A Frame operations. This activity was followed by some minor harvest activities in the early 1960's around Corner Bay and False Island. Timber harvest activities began to be scheduled in earnest during the 1971-76 operating period. Activities in the False Island/Sitkoh Bay area ended for the most part around 1979, along with activities at Crab Bay. Timber harvest activities in the Corner Bay area are still ongoing today. New harvest have been approved by the Record of Decision (ROD) for the 1981-90 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement(SEIS). The ROD for SEIS also approved additional harvest for the False Island/Sitkoh Bay area. Harvest is expected to begin this year. It has been 30 or more years since the harvesting of the first units, most units are between 10 and 20 years old, these previous harvest units have second growth that ranges from

10 to 30 feet tall. This growth is adequate to allow harvest of timber from some adjacent stands. Based on the time since the last entry and the current silvicultural condition, some portions of the project area are ready for additional harvest activities.

National controversy concerning management of the Tongass National Forest.

It appears, based on current legislation in Congress, that the public desires certain areas within the Alaska Pulp Corporation contract boundary to be designated Wilderness, or set aside as areas with no timber



harvests allowed. Except for VCU 246 the Southeast Chichagof project area is not included in legislative proposals currently being considered by Congress. VCU 246 while included in HR987 for wilderness designation, it is excluded from the Senate compromise proposal. We are including it in our analysis and will adjust it depending on how the legislation is passed. Thus, at this time we will not schedule harvest activities in any of the areas currently under consideration for special designation.

Modification of the Alaska Pulp Corporation 50-year timber sale contract.

In August, 1989 the Forest Service and

Alaska Pulp Corporation, under the direction of the US Department of Agriculture, re-negotiated the terms of the Alaska Pulp Corporation contract (Contract #12-11-010-1545). The re-negotiated terms of the contract met some of the current public concerns and accomplished two important changes relating to the selection of the Southeast Chichagof project area.

The first change requires that the Forest Service designate the individual operating areas. The second change provides minimum and maximum limits for the amount of timber volume to be made available each year to the Alaska Pulp Corporation. The effect of these modifications is to allow the Forest Service to select operating areas based on a variety of factors.

The area appears to have enough volume to meet Alaska Pulp Corporation long term contract commitments.

The re-negotiated terms of the contract with Alaska Pulp Corporation, requires a minimum volume of 240 Million Board Feet of timber be available to the company at any one time between 1992 and 1995. This amounts to between three and four years of normal timber "stock" so that Alaska Pulp Corporation can schedule a flow of raw materials to their mills.

The proposed activities for the Southeast Chichagof project area would be expected to supply enough timber to maintain the minimum volume from 1993 until the next scheduled project area can be analyzed and an environmental impact statement can be completed. Based on the conditions of the re-negotiated contract and on a preliminary review of the entire contract area, the fifteen LUD III and LUD IV VCUs which encompass the Southeast Chichagof project area appear to have sufficient volume available to warrant detailed investigation and

analysis. This investigation and analysis will result in preparation of an environmental impact statement.

What is the extent, or scope, of the project being proposed?

Within the Southeast Chichagof area there is a total of 238,000 acres according to the Tongass Land Management Plan. This acreage includes areas of rock, snow, ice, non-commercial vegetation, and commercial forest land. Previous and current logging activities have removed about 12,000 acres of the commercial forest. This proposal would schedule harvest of approximately 100 Million Board Feet (MMBF) on up to 5,000 acres.

In the past, nearly 130 miles of road have been built and 7 log transfer facilities used within the Southeast Chichagof project area. The current proposal includes constructing approximately 50 miles of road and building or rebuilding between 4 and 8 log transfer facilities. The development of log transfer facilities may include using the old sites, or exploring development of new sites. This amount of activity would result in three to four years of work for one timber sale operation.

What activities have occurred in the area?

A variety of activities and uses have occurred in the Southeast Chichagof project area. Many of these activities are still occurring. This includes dispersed recreation such as hunting and fishing, hiking and camping, and subsistence use by local individuals. Between 1961 and now, logging has occurred in each of the VCUs, except 227, 229 and 240. Described below is a brief summary of past and present activities, and current conditions for each VCU.



LEGEND

- 236 VCU NUMBER
- VCU BOUNDARY
- EXISTING ROADS
- ~ STREAMS
- (T) LOG TRANSFER FACILITY
- ▨ SALT WATER

0 4 8 12 16 Miles



SOUTHEAST CHICHAGOF ISLAND PROJECT AREA
 ALASKA PULP CORPORATION - LONG-TERM TIMBER SALE
 CONTRACT NUMBER 12-11-010-1545

VCU 227 - Hub Station has a total area of 3,854 acres. Of the total area, approximately 31 percent (1,211 acres) is classified as commercial forest. No timber harvesting has occurred in this VCU.

VCU 228 - Long Bay is a LUD II and has never been logged. This VCU has a total acreage of 18,659. Commercial forest land comprises 28 percent (5,271 acres) of the area.

VCU 229 - Seal Bay is a LUD II, however prior to TLMP in 1970 timber harvest of 331 acres was completed. Associated with this approximately 2 miles of road was constructed. This VCU comprises 23,198 acres with 25 percent (5,903 acres) of the total land area classified as commercial forest.

VCU 230 - Inbetween, encompasses a total of 9,639 acres. Approximately 42 percent (4,025 acres) of the total land is commercial forest. In 1966, 21 acres were A-Frame logged. Between 1985 and 1987, 260 acres were logged as part of the APC contract. This accounts for a total harvest of 7 percent of the total CFL. During this time, 3.5 miles of road was constructed.

VCU 231 - Saltery Bay includes a total of 18,478 acres. Of the total, approximately 31 percent (5,693 acres) is commercial forest. Prior to 1971, 200 acres were harvested.

VCU 232 - Crab Bay covers 11,477 acres. Within this area about 39 percent (4,537 acres) of the acres is commercial forest. In the past, 322 acres of timber were harvested.

VCU 233 - South Crab Bay includes a total of 10,515 acres. Within this area about 30 percent (3,123 acres) of the acres is commercial forest. In the past 252 acres of timber were harvested. During this time 10 miles of road was constructed.

VCU 234 - Fog Creek has a total of 6,002 acres. Approximately 62 percent (3,694 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 9 miles of road were constructed and 489 acres of timber were harvested.

VCU 236 - Corner Bay has a total of 10,930 acres. Approximately 66 percent (7,253 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 13 miles of road were constructed and 1297 acres of timber were harvested. There are currently 696 acres of timber harvest and 6.4 miles of road construction scheduled. Public marine and float plane access is available at the Corner Bay logging camp.

VCU 239 - Kook Lake has a total of 16,957 acres. Approximately 49 percent (8,393 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 15.5 miles of road were constructed and 1226 acres of timber were harvested. There are currently 360 acres of timber harvest and 6.4 miles of road construction scheduled. Existing recreation sites in this VCU include a trail to Kook Lake from Basket Bay and a Forest Service cabin.

VCU 240 - Little Basket Bay has a total of 9,390 acres. Approximately 41 percent (3,820 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. No timber harvesting has occurred in this VCU. There is, however, a road and harvest unit very close to the boundary with VCU 241. Marine access is available into this VCU.

VCU 241 - Do to Station has a total of 7,539 acres. Approximately 46 percent (3,479 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 6.1 miles of road were constructed and 715 acres of timber were harvested. Marine access is available into this VCU.

VCU 242 - White Rock has a total of 11,334 acres. Approximately 69 percent (7,785 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 13.5 miles of road were constructed and 1207 acres of timber were harvested. There are currently 360 acres of timber harvest and 3.5 miles of road construction scheduled.

VCU 243 - Sitkoh Bay has a total of 27,708 acres. Approximately 56 percent (15,625 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 27.4 miles of road were constructed and 1891 acres of timber were harvested. There are currently 429 acres of timber harvest and 7.5 miles of road construction scheduled. Several private recreational cabins are located at the old Chatham Cannery site on the western side of Sitkoh Bay. A recreation lodge is being considered for this site.

VCU 244 - Sitkoh Lake has a total of 11,472 acres. Approximately 54 percent (6,210 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 12.2 miles of road were constructed and 2116 acres of timber were harvested. Two Forest Service recreation cabins are located on Sitkoh Lake. The Forest Service also maintains a trail from Sitkoh Bay to Sitkoh Lake and to one of the cabins.

VCU 245 - False Island has a total of 23,732 acres. Approximately 68 percent (16,227 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. In the past 20.8 miles of road were constructed and 4065 acres of timber were harvested. The Forest Service maintains an administrative site at False Island, and this area is currently approved for location of a logging camp and Log Transfer Facility. The Southeast Alaska Regional Health Corporation (SEARHC) currently holds a Special use permit for the use of the administrative site. Marine access is available at False Island.

VCU 246 - Broad Island has a total of 17,145 acres. Approximately 38 percent (6,558 acres) of the area is classified as commercial forest. No timber harvest has occurred in this VCU.

What issues are already being considered?

Several issues have been raised relative to the National and Regional controversy over how the Tongass National Forest should be managed. Some issues relate to the long term timber sale contracts in Alaska. Both of these discussions are beyond the scope of this project. They are of National and Regional consideration and will be addressed by Congress or by the Tongass National Forest Land Management Plan being revised at this time.

There are a number of tentative issues that the Southeast Chichagof Island Planning team has identified from previous planning efforts. These are considered within the scope of the project. These issues will be addressed through a systematic collection and analysis of natural resource information and alternatives. These issues are listed below.

1. How does timber harvest and road building activities affect wildlife habitat?
2. How does timber harvest and road building activities affect fish habitat?
3. What would be the socioeconomic effects of logging and associated development on southeast Alaska residents?
4. What are the specific effects of timber harvest and road building activities on subsistence use?
5. Where would log transfer facilities (LTF's) be located and what would be the environmental effects?

6. What are the transportation system needs on Southeast Chichagof Island in order to harvest timber and what affect does vehicular travel have on forest resources?
7. How would timber harvest and road building activities effect recreation and scenic resources?

How will issues be used?

The issues raised, if identified early in the planning process, are used to guide field investigations, resource analysis, alternative development, and the decisions being made. This process of identifying issues is designed to help guide the planning process, and is not a public vote. We will address all valid concerns within the scope of this project, whether that concern is raised by one person or by many.

How can I help?

Many people ask themselves, "why should I get involved?" As a public participant, you can contribute valuable information on issues we may be overlooking. You may be more familiar with specific portions of the project area than our planning team. So please take a few minutes to send us your thoughts. We appreciate your input and to be most helpful, we would like your comments to be specific and factual concerning the immediate project area.

To be most effective, your comments should include additional issues you think we should consider, and any specific concerns relating to the proposed activities:

*** Concerns with proposed road locations and log transfer facility locations. Are there specific locations you feel roads and log transfer facilities would be inappropriate within the project**

area?

*** Concerns with timber harvest unit locations. Can you be specific in stating areas and reasons why timber harvesting should not occur in one or more of the drainages within the project area?**

*** Concerns with how resources used for subsistence lifestyles could be affected by road construction, log transfer facilities, or timber harvesting within the project area. What bays, rivers, or drainages are of most concern to you? Which resources most concern your subsistence lifestyle? How do you think they would be impacted?**

*** Concerns with how the proposed activities might enhance or otherwise affect non-timber resources within the project area. How might the proposed activities be designed to benefit the resources of the area. What specific areas, resources, or actions should be considered in planning or accomplishing the proposed activities.**

If you prefer, feel free to visit our office in Sitka at 204 Siginaka Way, or telephone the planning team leader, Gordon Anderson at (907) 747-6671. If you think we might have missed someone who is interested in the Southeast Chichagof project, please share this information with them and ask them to contact us.

On page 11 is a public response form that when detached, can be folded and mailed back to our office. Feel free to attach extra sheets, or mark your comments on the Southeast Chichagof Project map found at the center of the document. Please send us your comments, so that they arrive by Friday, June 22, 1990.

SOUTHEAST CHICHAGOF - PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Do we have your correct address? ____ YES ____ NO. If not, please provide it below.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

If you did not receive this document in the mail, you are not on our mailing list for this project. If you would like to be included in future mailings, please print your address above. If you officially represent any group, institution, or organization please also list that group's name.

DO YOU WISH TO RECEIVE FUTURE MAILINGS ABOUT THIS PROJECT? ____ YES ____ NO

If yes, we will maintain you on our project mailing list. If we do not hear from you, you may be dropped from the list.

Comments:

Return Address:

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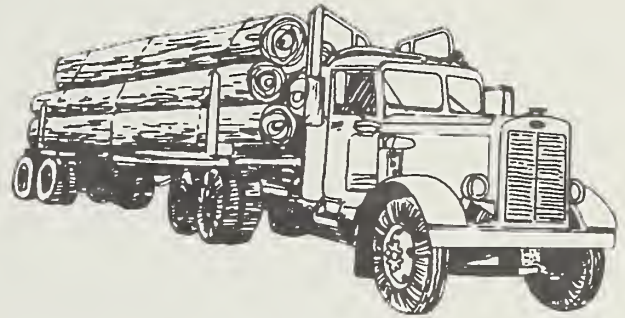
**USDA Forest Service
Chatham Area
204 Siginaka Way
Sitka, Alaska 99835**

Attn: Gordon Anderson - Southeast Chichagof Planning Team

Additional Comments:

TIMELINE FOR GETTING THE JOB DONE

The spring of 1992 is the deadline for a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to meet the 1993 needs for timber supply in compliance with the Alaska Pulp Corporation contract.



GLOSSARY

TASKS TARGET COMPLETION DATE

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1. Scoping document and NOI	April 23, 1990
2. End of scoping period	June 4, 1990
3. Disclose key issues to the public	July 9, 1990
4. Field Verification	August 20, 1990
5. Develop draft alternatives	Feb 7, 1991
6. Disclose tentative alternatives to the public	Feb 28, 1991
7. Finalize alternatives	August 22, 1991
8. Analyze Effects	October 10, 1991
9. Finalize Draft EIS for publication	October 24, 1991
10. Document Publication	November 14, 1991
11. Draft EIS available to the public	November 14, 1991
12. Subsistence Hearings	December 16, 1991
13. End of Public review	December 26, 1991
14. Final EIS and Record of Decision available to the public	April 9, 1992



ANADROMOUS FISH - Fish (such as salmon, steelhead, and shad) that spend part of their lives in freshwater and part of their lives in saltwater.

CULTURAL RESOURCES - Historic or prehistoric objects, sites, buildings, structures, and so on that result from past human activities.

ISSUES - Points, matters, or questions to be resolved.

LOG TRANSFER FACILITY (LTF) - A facility that is used for transferring commercially harvested logs to and from a vessel or log raft. It is wholly or partially constructed in waters of the United States and siting and construction are regulated by the 1987 Amendments to the Clean Water Act. Formerly termed terminal transfer facility.

LAND USE DESIGNATION (LUD) - The method of classifying land uses presented in the Tongass Land Management Plan (TLMP). Land uses and activities are grouped to define, along with a set of coordinating policies, a compatible combination of management activities.

SCOPING - An early and open process for determining the extent or range of the issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.

VALUE COMPARISON UNIT (VCU) - A distinct geographic area that generally encompasses a drainage basin containing one or more large stream systems. These units were established on the Tongass National Forest to provide a common set of areas for which resource inventories could be conducted and resource value interpretations made.

USDA FOREST SERVICE
TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
CHATHAM AREA
204 SIGINAKA WAY
SITKA, ALASKA 99835

